

STYLIANOS

**By the grace of God Archbishop of Australia
To all the Clergy and devout faithful
of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese**

Brother Concelebrants and beloved children in Christ who is Risen,

The basic stages we passed through liturgically this year, before Holy Pascha, are well-known to all the faithful:

**Triodion
Holy and Great Lent
Holy and Great Week of the Passion and Resurrection**

In between (for spiritual relief and consolation within the period of fasting), we experienced the 'Salutations' and the 'Annunciation of the Mother of God', followed by the **'joyful sorrow'** of 'Palm Sunday'.

The Grace of God, who loves all humankind, has once again enabled us to taste all the above in repentance, for the **edification** and **salvation** of our own selves and the entire world.

This year we had the pleasure of celebrating the triumph of Pascha together - that is, at the same time - with Christians of the West. And we recognize how much **easier** the simultaneous celebration is for the daily lives of working people, especially where there are **minorities** of faithful from various denominations.

With these undoubtedly blessed presuppositions, we are called once more to continue with endurance our strenuous journey between the harsh '*Symplegades*' of recent times, keeping our **spirit of the Resurrection** upright, no matter to what extent the **darkness** of the present world may alarm us.

However, maintaining the 'spirit of the Resurrection' does not mean **indifference** or an **underestimation** of the new dangers that threaten all of humanity at this time.

This would be an unacceptable **hypocrisy** and a false **triumphalism** concerning the Resurrection, which would be irreconcilable with our Christian Faith.

It would also be an inexcusable betrayal of the redemptive **message** and **example** of the Apostles through the centuries.

At this very point it should be mentioned that the '**Apostles**' were not only the **Twelve Disciples** of Christ. Nor were they only the 500 or a multiplication of this number to whom the Risen Lord subsequently appeared at various intervals.

The **Apostolic character** of the Church (just as with all other **charismata** granted by the Risen Lord) cannot be 'monopolized' in some manner by the 'spiritual Shepherds' and 'Teachers'. It is simply that these gifts are exercised by them **in essence**, with the 'consent' and 'collaboration' of Clergy and lay people.

Only in this manner can the whole Church be understood in an **Orthodox** manner (*i.e.* genuinely and authentically!), with Christ being its irreplaceable Head, and all the faithful - both men and women - as Members of His Sacred Body.

See then, brothers and sisters, that even in times of **various impasses**, such as today, the Cross of Christ, who Suffered and Rose for all people, is able to transform the **most tragic** circumstances of the world into a 'Resurrectional mobilisation' of those who pray. Provided that we firmly remain **believing, hoping** and **loving** in the name of the only God-Man, who reconciled us forever with our Creator God, elevating us from children of '**wrath**' into children of '**adoption**'.

To Him be all **glory** and **veneration** unto the ages.

Easter 2010

With fervent prayers in Christ who is Risen

Archbishop S T Y L I A N O S

[translation by DK]